

hundred or more saloons which had turned Manila, the Philippine islands, into such a pandemonium of iniquity as had never been witnessed there before, could be instantly abolished by an order from President McKinley, and he seemed to think that the President ought to abolish them. If he did, all good men would rejoice, while in the midst of the liquor camp there would be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Altogether there are most encouraging indications that in the most influential quarters a very decided and positive sentiment has developed of opposition to the saloon, opposition to the vast iniquity and wholesale damnation of drink, together with a disposition to put that sentiment in a most practical and useful form, the form of prohibitive legislation. God prosper the work.

Christianity and Confucianism

Early in December of 1900, Wu Ting Fang, Chinese minister to the United States, was invited to address the Society for Ethical Culture at Carnegie Hall, Pittsburg, Pa., on "The Teachings of Confucius." The address was delivered on the day appointed, and a friend of ours, one who is not as favorably inclined toward Christianity as we earnestly wish him to be, sends us a few extracts from the address and asks us to give our opinion as to the correctness of the statements made and what he regards as the facts in the case. Our friend thinks the address is the most sensible presentation of the real situation and the most sane treatment of the subject of which he has any knowledge. An exhaustive reply would require all the editorial space at our command; we must therefore be very brief in the criticism of an address which to our mind is fundamentally at fault. To be fair, and not to seem fair only, we give in full the extracts of the lecture sent us, altho we read the entire address as it appeared in the daily press the day after its delivery, and no doubt others of our readers did the same. Mr. Wu said:

"In the strictest sense of the word Confucianism is not a religion. It is not a system of doctrine and worship. It is perhaps easier to say what Confucianism is not than what it is. The immortality of the soul is a beautiful doctrine, I admit. I wish it were true, and I hope it is true. But all the reasoning of Plato cannot make it more than a strong probability, and all the light of modern science has not brought us one step further. Confucius would be called an agnostic if he were alive to day. There were four things that he would not talk about—extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder and spiritual being. 'How are we to serve spiritual beings?' he was asked. 'When you do not know how to serve men, how should you hope to serve spirits?' he replied. Horace Greely said that those who discharge promptly and faithfully their duty to those who linger in the flesh have but little time to peer into the affairs of those who have passed away. Confucius was intensely human and practical. He did not spend time speculating as to what will happen after death."

The minister then compared the practical teachings of Confucius with those of Christ. He read a passage from the New Testament directing that evil be not resisted with evil and that if a man smite you on one cheek, you should turn the other cheek. Of this doctrine Mr. Wu said:

"This, it seems to me, is meekness with a vengeance. I am inclined to think that no sensible man has ever followed this injunction. A man who would smite you on the cheek is a dangerous man and needs no second invitation. A man who will take your coat is a thief and would doubtless take your cloak, too, if he could lay his hands on it.

'Love your enemies.' Such a standard is too high for humanity. There is no likelihood that many people will follow it. At this very moment Christian missionaries are calling for bloodshed and vengeance, and Christian armies are devastating my land, sparing neither age nor sex. There is indeed a vast gulf between doctrine and performance. Could you love one who had killed your father and destroyed your home? Confucianism does not require such a thing. It enjoins that kindness be requited with kindness and an injury with justice. It does not sanction retaliation in a

vindictive spirit, such as, I regret to say, is shown by some persons professing to be governed by the tenets of Christianity.

The most striking instance in which the teachings of Confucius and of Christ meet is the Golden Rule. Confucius puts it negatively, "Do not do to others what you would not wish them to do to you,"—but anyone who will follow that rule, either way it is phrased, will be a thoroughly good man.

A good Christian is a good Confucian, and a good Confucian is a good Christian. I do not believe that heaven is an exclusive place. The advocates of various religions are all trying to make a private park of it for their own adherents. Whatever heaven may be, I believe it is a place for all good men, irrespective of dogma. The Chinese are an eminently practical race. Confucius did not run away from the world, but did his duty in it. He teaches men to do good for the sake of good and not for any promise of reward or thru any threat of punishment. The world is gradually coming to Confucius. One of the signs is the growth of agnosticism. I will not say whether people are growing more callous or more civilized, but they are no more terrified when the terrors of the next world are proclaimed from the pulpit."

Mr. Wu Ting Fang is a fluent talker; he seems to have a thorough command of English. When some one asked him where he learned English, he said, "In China, of course." That he is a brilliant fellow is not to be denied, but that he has not made Christianity a study he himself acknowledges in the very speech from which these extracts are taken. Surely one who confesses that he has not studied the Bible is not a competent judge as to what the Bible teaches. Suppose from the works of Confucius we were to make a selection of a few paragraphs, one here and another there, and from these deliver a lecture on the fundamental teachings of Confucius, there would at once be a cry of unfairness, prejudice, lack of knowledge and grasp of the fundamentals of a great system of morals, and justly so, for it is unfair to wrest a few passages from their right relations from any one's writings and make them the basis of judgment as to the correctness of his philosophy.

On the extracts from the address sent us we offer the following comment: (1) Frankly and humbly we acknowledge that the professed followers of Christ our Savior do not live up to the standard of his teachings; no, far from it. We do not expect another to live just as Christ lived in every particular; but this, instead of an argument against Christianity, is one that should appeal to every intelligent man. Mr. Wu quotes the passage referring to non-resistance, and remarks that it is a standard too high for humanity. Why so? Is there any standard too high for man who was created in the very image of God himself? That standard need not be attained to realize the promise of blessing. An honest effort, a pure motive, a right heart, these have the promise of approval by the Father himself. Surely it is better to aim at a high standard even if one should fall below it, than to aim at a low standard and attain to it. Christianity holds out a promise and a hope to the humblest child of humanity, while it is not without a promise and a hope of larger things, greater achievements, both in the realm of the intellectual and the spiritual, to the master minds of every age. In other words Christianity addresses itself to the ignorant as well as to the learned, and both may find in the system of religion we call Christianity, the widest possible field for the development, and the enlargement of the faculties with which God may have endowed them. In this Christianity is unique. No one, to our knowledge, has ever attained to the exalted, divinely human and humanly divine character of the Lord Jesus, neither has any earnest soul ever grown weary in its efforts to reach a "standard too high for hu-